

H/02/27/02  
CSPC: 21.09.17

The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)  
held on Thursday 21 September 2017 in the Edinburgh College of Art Main Building  
Boardroom (L05)**

**Present:**

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Paul Norris	Associate Dean (Academic Progress), CAHSS
Dr Lisa Kendall	Head of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Professor Neil Turner	Dean of Undergraduate Learning and Teaching (CMVM)
Dr Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSCE)
Ms Bobi Archer	Vice President Education Students' Association
Ms Ellie Tudhope	Senior Academic Adviser
Ms Claire Thomson	Academic Adviser, Students' Association
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web

**In attendance:**

Mr Scott Rosie	Head of Timetabling Services (for Paper A and B only)
Mr Neil McGillivray	Service Excellence Programme (for Service Excellence Programme update only)
Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

**Apologies for absence:**

Ms Alexandra Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Dr Juliette MacDonald	Edinburgh College of Art
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 1 June 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. Matters Arising**

- a) Revisions to the Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy were approved by the Committee by electronic business between 18<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. This involved the removal of reference to the census points and exam attendance monitoring, in line with the recommendations from UKVI and Pennington audit reports.

### **3. Service Excellence Programme (Verbal Update)**

Mr Neil McGillivray presented a verbal update on this item.

Service Excellence Programme Project update, September 2017:

- Working and Study Away: Process and People workshops had been completed; project was currently undergoing validation; systems workshop was planned, with submission of a final business case planned for consideration at the 20 November 2017 Service Excellence Board.
- Special Circumstances: Process and People Workshops had been completed; business processes currently awaiting validation; systems workshops were planned for early/mid-October 2017. The Service Excellence Programme staff were committed to discussing further with Academic Services before wider stakeholder validation. Depending on the outcome, a final business case would be presented to the Service Excellence Board in November 2017, with CSPC approval required for any policy changes.
- Comprehensive Timetabling Analysis: good progress had been made, taking account of the rollout of new processes in CAHSS and a related pilot in Chemistry; full documentation was expected to be delivered to the 20 November 2017 Service Excellence Board.
- Exam Timetabling: good progress had been made; testing was scheduled for completion in December 2017, in preparation for full implementation ahead of the May 2018 exam diet.
- Student Portal pilot: project currently undergoing analysis, and validation of student and staff requirements, with first set of developments due to be implemented for the pilot schools in the coming month.
- Policy and Tier 4 projects: work was ongoing; policy timelines had been re-assessed, and workshops were scheduled for October 2017, alongside TOM (Target operating model) workshops.

Over the coming months, the Student Administration and Support strand of Service Excellence was going to be moving into a new implementation phase. During this phase, it would be important that Senate Committees continued to be fully involved. In addition, certain Committees, particularly CSPC, would have a role in approving policy changes relating to Service Excellence. There would therefore be routine update papers coming to all four Senate Committees over the coming months, and more targeted interventions for those Committees such as CPSC that needed to approve policy changes.

It was necessary to ensure that the relevant Senate Committees undertook the necessary scrutiny and approval of policy changes whilst minimising any delay in delivering the Service Excellence plans. It was therefore possible that the Committee would need to be flexible in terms of doing business by correspondence or even exceptional meetings, where there was too long a gap until the next Committee meeting.

### **4. CSPC Membership and Terms of Reference 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 A)**

The Committee membership list and Terms of Reference 2017/18 were approved as presented.

### **5. Resits and Supplementary Assessments Guidance (CSPC 17/18 1 B)**

Dr Adam Bunni presented this item. The Resits and Supplementary Assessments Guidance had been introduced in August 2014, seeking to reduce the University's dependency on the

August resit diet. Evidence provided by Student Administration indicated that the number of August resit examinations had continued to rise since the introduction of the guidance. The Committee was now being asked to consider whether it wished to reaffirm its commitment to the principles set out in the guidance, revise the guidance, or remove it.

**a) Timing of resit assessment for Semester 1 courses**

The guidance had encouraged Schools to offer early resit assessment for failed semester 1 examinations during the main semester 2 examination diet. However, feedback from Schools indicated that they were not taking this approach; some Schools had trialled it, but had since moved away from it, as it had not been feasible in practice. Committee members agreed that the approach proposed in the guidance placed undue pressure in the semester 2 diet on students who were already struggling. The Committee therefore agreed that they no longer wished to reaffirm the commitment to the particular principle of offering early resit assessments for failed semester 2 examinations during the main semester 2 examination diet.

**b) Use of alternative methods of assessment for resits**

The guidance also explored the use of alternative assessment for resits e.g. the possibility of students being offered the opportunity to undertake repeat assessments which focused on any learning outcomes they had failed to achieve in the first attempt. It was agreed that Schools should continue to be encouraged to consider whether an alternative method of assessment could be used at reassessment. However, the guidance would not need to be retained for this specific purpose, because the Taught Assessment Regulations already stated (27.11 in 2017/18) that Boards of Examiners may use alternative methods of assessment for resits:

27.11 “Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed.”

**c) Overseas Examination Service**

The guidance referred to the potential for students to undertake some written examinations offered during the August resit diet out-with the UK at a British Council Office, through the Overseas Examination Service, which was provided by Student Administration. Information was presented to the Committee regarding the usage of the service over the last three-year period. Members discussed the advantages and limitations of the service, noting that several Schools do not offer students the use of it. Members agreed that it was desirable where possible to avoid requiring overseas students to come to Edinburgh in August for resits. It was agreed that CSPC wished to reaffirm its commitment to offering the Overseas Examination Service, and seek to offer it as consistently as possible across the University.

Although it was recognised by the Committee that the status of the Resits and Supplementary Assessment document was guidance rather than policy, it was felt that some aspects were no longer relevant (see a) above). The guidance would therefore be archived, and retained for future reference if required. However, the Committee agreed that it should communicate to Schools an expectation to explore the use of alternative methods of assessment for resits, and to offer the Overseas Examination Service wherever possible.

**ACTION – Ailsa Taylor to archive the Resits and Supplementary Assessment Guidance and remove from the website.**

**ACTION – Convener to send communication to Schools regarding alternative assessments and Overseas Examinations.**

## 6. Guidance on Moderation (CSPC 17/18 1 C)

Dr Neil Lent presented this draft guidance on moderation of taught assessment. The guidance was designed to complement the Taught Assessment Regulations, which had recently been revised following the 2016-17 review of moderation, and to replace the guidance provided within the Principles of Internal Moderation of Taught Assessment.

The Committee discussed and approved the moderation guidance, subject to some minor amendments which included:

- In relation to sampled second marking there was a reference to a minimum sample size of 10% of the total number of assignments (no less than ten assignments). This would be amended to make reference to small cohorts – in those instances then a minimum sample size of between five and ten assignments would be appropriate;
- In the section entitled 'Moderation where assignments are not physical products' it was agreed to remove the final sentence [e.g. remove 'Where this is not possible, the moderator should review the marker's record of having assessed the students' performance against the assessment criteria'].
- The paper for the Committee had included an annex that was used as an example, but this was not to form part of the published guidance.

It was noted that the status of this information was guidance rather than policy and therefore non-mandatory. The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) would publish the guidance on its webpages, and the final version when published would be circulated to members of the Committee and to School Directors of Teaching and Teaching Administrators. It would also be highlighted in the next edition of the Senate Committees' newsletter.

**ACTION – Ailsa Taylor to send a note to CSPC members with information contained in the Taught Assessment Regulations on moderation and standard setting.**

**ACTION – Tom Ward (Academic Services) and Neil Lent (IAD) and Susan Rhind (Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback) to finalise the guidance.**

**ACTION – IAD to publish the guidance on its webpages and inform Academic Services (Tom Ward) when this had been completed so that this information can be communicated more widely.**

## 7. Authorised Interruption of Study – Proposal for a University-wide Policy (CSPC 17/18 1 D)

Dr Adam Bunni introduced this item which outlined a proposal for University-wide policy and guidance in relation to Authorised Interruption of Study, following a recommendation from the recent Review of Support for Disabled Students. CSPC approved the formation of a short-life task group to develop University-wide policy and guidance which would cover both taught and research students. The task group would be asked to consider the following:

- a clear definition of Authorised Interruption of Study;
- acceptable grounds for requesting an interruption;
- the application process;
- the consideration and approval process;
- the status of students who are interrupted;

- categories for recording interruptions on the student record;
- the return to study process;
- when an interruption of studies can be offered e.g. can an interruption be offered during the examination period.

The group would also consider which aspects of new documentation should constitute mandatory policy, and which should be non-mandatory guidance.

Membership would be sought for the task group following the meeting. Representatives would be sought from each College and from the Students' Association, Student Systems, and the Student Counselling or Student Disability Service.

### **8. Postgraduate Taught Assessment and Progression (CSPC 17/18 1 E)**

Dr Adam Bunni introduced this item which outlined a proposal to create a Task Group to consider aspects of postgraduate taught assessment and progression. CSPC approved the formation of a task group to consider this matter further. The Task Group was remitted to consider the PGT programme structure, with specific focus on:

- progression, specifically progression to the dissertation element of a PGT Master's programme;
- whether all PGT Master's programmes were required to have a dissertation or research project element;
- whether the University should consider relaxing its current position in regards to resubmission of Master's dissertations; and
- the role of the dissertation/research project supervisor.

Membership would be sought for the task group following the meeting.

### **9. Collaborative Provision: use of our credits by other institutions (CLOSED F)**

This closed paper was received by the Committee. The Committee agreed that additional scrutiny would need to be given to proposed collaborations which involved double-counting of credit by either party, and that it would expect to have sight of individual proposals of this nature. In particular, the Committee agreed that collaborations which involved the potential for dissertations submitted at the University of Edinburgh for one award to be reused or repurposed at another institution for a different award would be unlikely to be approved.

### **10. CMVM: Articulation Agreements (Verbal Update)**

Dr Sheila Lodge provided a verbal update on this item. A collaboration had been proposed by the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Medicine (Vet School) – this contained articulation proposals between the BVM&S programme at the University of Edinburgh and selected North American pre-vet programmes.

These proposed articulation agreements did not constitute a dual award degree arrangement; the proposals were to formalise the link between two distinct programmes of student - students would obtain single-badged degrees from both institutions, but, for example, the credits obtained during the first year of the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery would be double-counted by Alberta/McGill for the award of its BSc Animal Science.

A collaboration of this sort already existed between the University and the College of Veterinary Medicine, China Agricultural University, and had the advantage of increasing the international intake by the School and of maintaining the University's hold in the international market, ensuring that diversity in the University's intake was maintained within a global platform.

The Committee would be considering a formal proposal from the Vet School by electronic business, and provided the College with some feedback on the information presented to assist with this proposal.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to pass notes of this item to Sheila Lodge so that the School could be asked to consider the queries and prepare a paper for the Committee to be dealt with by correspondence.**

#### **11. CMVM: New Programme Proposal: DVet Med (CSPC 17/18 1 H)**

Dr Sheila Lodge presented this paper, which was formally approved by the Committee. It was recommended that the School provide more clarity in programme documentation going forward about progression requirements and resit opportunities.

#### **12. Curriculum Framework: Structure for Teaching and Assessment (CSPC 17/18 1 I)**

It was agreed that this policy would be archived as it contained historical information that was no longer relevant, or information that was already contained within other policies. An archived version of the policy would be retained for future reference if required.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to archive this policy.**

#### **13. Student Discipline Committee Membership and Student Discipline Officers 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 J)**

This item was received by the Committee for information, as the membership lists had already been approved by Professor Murray on behalf of the Committee by correspondence in August 2017.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to ensure Student Discipline Committee and Student Discipline Officer membership lists up to date for 2017/18 at [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee) [www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf](http://www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf)**

#### **14. Senate Committee Planning (CSPC 17/18 1 K)**

Mr Tom Ward presented this paper which summarised details of the operation of the 2018-21 planning round. Senate committees would be able to input into this, and views were also being sought on some initial priorities for student experience, learning and teaching for the planning round.

The following comments were made:

- The guidance should refer to developing high quality learning and teaching spaces for taught and research students;

- The item on enhancing 'academic support' should refer to 'pastoral' support as well;
- The item on developing new approaches to online learning should highlight the value of developing new innovative pedagogies using digital technologies.

#### **15. Students' Association Priorities 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 L)**

This paper sought to provide an introduction to the Students' Association new sabbatical officers and their priorities for 2017/18. Ms Bobi Archer presented her objectives for 2017/18 which included:

- planned strategies to reduce the pressures of semester 1;
- a focus on developing support for students undertaking joint degrees, and;
- the establishment of more coherent class representation structures, with transparency in communications to amplify the student voice.

#### **16. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (CSPC 17/18 1 M)**

This item was received by the Committee for information.

#### **17. Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, 28 September 2017